

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4335

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 6224

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PGOV, BL

SUBJ: NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GOB AND DR PAZ ESTENSSORO

REF: LA PAZ 5604 ND 6192

1. EMBASSY HAS HEARD FROM RELIABLE SOURCE THAT PRESIDENT BANZER, THROUGH THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR, HAS ASKED JORGE MURILLO, APPARENTLY A BOLIVIAN CITIZEN RESIDENT IN LIMA WHO IS FAVORABLY KNOWN TO BOTH THE GOB AND DR PAZ, TO FIND OUT WHAT DR PAZ WANTS IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS SUPPORT OF A GOB DESIGNATED CANDIDATE TO SUCCEED BANZER IN THE JUNE 1975 ELECTIONS. MURILLO TRAVELLED TO LIMA, PRESUMABLY ON THIS MISSION, ON SEPTEMBER 24, THE MINISTER ALLEGEDLY TOLD MURILLO THAT THE PRESIDENT AND HIS ADVISORS HAD CONCLUDED THAT PAZ HAD LEFT A LARGE POLITICAL VACUUM IN BOLIVIA AND THAT HIS RETURN IN SUPPORT OF A CONTINUATION (CONTINUISMO) CANDIDATE WOULD BE IMPORTANT FOR THE MUCH NEEDED POLITICAL STABILITY OF BOLIVIA

2. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE GOB IS SUPPORTING RUBEN JULIO FOR THE POSITION OF PARTY CHIEF AT THE MNR CONVENTION ON SEPTEMBER 28, WITH THE PURPOSE OF MAKING SURE THAT DR PAZ IS NOT ELECTED IN ABSENTIA, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THE ELECTION OF JULIO WILL HAVE NO PRACTICAL MEANING IF PAZ AND THE GOB
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COME TO TERMS AT A LATER DATE. IN OTHER WORDS, JULIO IS AS

GOOD AS ELECTED PARTY CHIEF NOW, BUT ONLY BECAUSE OF THE DELEGATES TO THE CONVENTION KNOW THAT TO DO OTHERWISE WOULD MEAN GOING INTO OPPOSITION TO THE GOB. THEY ALL KNOW THAT NO MATTER WHO IS ELECTED, DR PAZ REMAINS THE REAL LEADER OF THE MNR, AND COULD EXERCISE THAT LEADERSHIP WHENEVER HE RETURNS TO BOLIVIA.

3. IT IS THE EMBASSY'S OPINION THAT AN OFFICIAL PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ELECTED WITH THE SUPPORT OF DR PAZ, WOULD BE MUCH MORE STABLE THAN ONE ELECTED DESPITE HIS OPPOSITION. A SUCCESSFUL ARRANGMENT BETWEEN THE GOB AND PAZ THEREFORE IS OF SOME IMPORTANCE.
STEDMAN

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